

St Martin's Garden Primary School

Lympsham Green, Odd Down, Bath, BA2 2UN

Inspection dates 25–26 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is not high enough. Too few pupils attain the higher National Curriculum levels, particularly in writing.
- Pupils' progress from their different starting points is not consistently good in writing. Some groups of pupils have not made enough progress.
- Pupils' learning does not always move on quickly enough because teachers sometimes set work that is too easy or too difficult.
- Pupils do not always produce sufficient work, particularly in writing, because teachers do not always expect them to do enough in the time available.
- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement because attitudes to learning are not consistently positive.
- There are times in lessons when pupils lose interest and do not do their best work, especially when activities are undemanding.
- Leaders and managers have not improved teaching and pupils' achievement quickly enough because checks on teaching have not been sufficiently effective. There is not enough support to help teachers to improve.
- Governors do not challenge leaders sufficiently about how well pupils achieve and about the arrangements to set targets for teachers.

The school has the following strengths:

- Pupils in the Margaret Coates Centre achieve well because they are managed skilfully by staff and are given work which is suitable for their needs.
- Pupils' progress is strongest in mathematics and reading. Pupils in the current Year 6 are on track to attain higher levels than those reached in 2013.
- Pupils are given frequent opportunities to act on the advice given in marking and this is helping them to improve their work.
- The school makes effective use of the additional funding provided to help some pupils to improve their reading skills, leading to better progress and more confident reading.
- Leaders' work to keep pupils safe is good. There is a common determination to help the school to improve.
- The headteacher provides information about pupils' progress which is regularly updated for staff and governors and is clear and informative.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons of which three were joint observations with the headteacher. They also scrutinised samples of pupils' work and heard children read.
- Inspectors held meetings with school staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. A meeting with a representative of the local authority also took place.
- Inspectors took account of the 35 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also gathered parents' and carers' views through informal conversations and letters sent to the inspection team, and the views of staff through discussions and 21 questionnaire returns.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documents, including improvement plans, safeguarding documents, checks on the quality of teaching, records relating to attendance, and the school's data on pupils' attainment and progress.

Inspection team

Peter Clifton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Elizabeth Strange

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Martin's Garden Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school has specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs relating to autistic spectrum disorder. This is called the Margaret Coates Centre, which currently has 21 pupils, taught in three additional classes. All of these pupils have a statement of special educational needs, and some pupils have a range of more complex needs.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is above average; the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs (outside of the Margaret Coates Centre) is also above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families, is well above average. Currently, the school has no pupils who are from service families
- The school's published results include pupils from the Margaret Coates Centre.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen teaching in order to improve pupils' progress and raise their attainment, particularly in writing, by:
 - making sure that activities provided for different groups are well matched to pupils' learning needs, including those who are more able
 - ensuring that teachers set higher expectations of pupils and clarify how much work they should complete in the time available
 - ensuring that tasks set are sufficiently demanding and stimulating to maintain pupils' interest and consistently positive attitudes.
- Increase the impact of leadership, management and governance by:
 - applying greater rigour in assessing the quality of teaching through checking more closely on the learning and progress of different groups of pupils, and ensuring that any groups who are not doing well enough make more rapid progress
 - supporting teachers to improve the quality of their work in order to ensure that all teaching is consistently good
 - ensuring that governors are more effective in challenging school leaders about pupils' achievement and about the arrangements to set annual targets for teachers.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Attainment by the end of Year 6 and Year 2 is below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Results show that, in 2013, pupils in Year 6 made the progress expected nationally from their starting points in Year 3. Pupils did not do well enough in writing but made much better progress in mathematics.
- Pupils in the current Years 2 and 6 are on track to attain higher levels than those reached in 2013 in reading, writing and mathematics. In Year 6, for example, more pupils are on track to reach the expected level in reading and mathematics; this would represent broadly average attainment. Writing remains the weakest subject.
- Children start school with knowledge, skills and understanding that are well below the levels expected for their age, particularly in their communication and language skills, and in their emotional development. In 2013, the proportion of children who reached a good level of development was considerably below the national average.
- A greater proportion of reception children in the current year group are on track to reach a good level of development as a result of additional support provided, including for more-able children, and the stronger focus on teaching letters and their sounds (phonics).
- The school's records show that, for nearly all groups including those who are more able and those who benefit from additional funding, progress is now improving in reading and mathematics. However, progress in writing remains weaker in Years 4 and 6.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, outside of the Margaret Coates Centre, make progress which is broadly similar to that of other pupils.
- In 2013, there was a very small overall gap in performance between pupils eligible for the pupil premium and other pupils in Year 6. This was equivalent to being two months behind in reading but two months ahead in writing. The gap in mathematics was very small. Over the past three years, gaps in performance have been closed sharply in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils in the Margaret Coates Centre make good progress from their different starting points and achieve well. Activities are closely matched to their needs, and expectations for the pupils to participate and do their best are high.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet sufficiently strong to promote good achievement across the school.
- Pupils' learning does not always proceed quickly enough in lessons. For example, pupils sometimes complete activities very quickly and then wait for more work or, on other occasions, teachers do not give pupils sufficiently clear guidance about how to complete work.
- Pupils do not always do sufficient writing in literacy lessons and in other subjects. Teachers are not always clear enough about how much work they expect the pupils to do in the time available. Sometimes, too much time is taken up before pupils, including the more able, start the writing activity. The samples of work seen show that, on occasions, there are too few opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills.
- Typically, teaching assistants provide sensitive support to help pupils, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs, to stay on task, or to make sure that they understand what is being taught. This is particularly evident in the Margaret Coates Centre. However, on some occasions in the main school, pupils' learning and progress are inhibited because teaching assistants are too quick to intervene and help.
- In the Reception classes, children make steady progress, for example when they sequence patterns and events and order numbers.
- Teachers give pupils time (called fix-it time) to reflect on the often detailed comments that they make in their marking. Pupils respond to teachers' comments, and this is helping them to

improve aspects of their work, including their writing. For example, pupils in Year 3 were asked to develop the way they connected sentences together and they showed this in their next pieces of work.

- In lessons, learning typically takes place in a very positive atmosphere. Relationships between staff and pupils are particularly good, and teachers manage pupils well, especially in the Margaret Coates Centre.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because their attitudes to learning are not consistently positive. This is especially noticeable in those lessons where pupils are not given sufficiently challenging work.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors commented that they liked coming to school and that it was unusual for their learning to be interrupted, although some pupils occasionally chat during lessons when they should be working.
- Some pupils do not take enough pride in their work and sometimes not enough work is completed. However, the presentation of work in books is mainly good. The school is clean and tidy and free from litter.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school keeps detailed records of any incidents, and logs show that the number of instances of bad behaviour and bullying is low and reducing. Teachers remind pupils about keeping safe when they use computers and the internet. Pupils show that they understand this advice.
- This is a very caring school where pupils are treated as individuals. Pupils understand the school's code of behaviour, and discrimination is not tolerated. In and around the school, pupils are polite and respectful.
- In the Margaret Coates Centre, pupils show considerable enjoyment of their learning, for example when singing and dancing to music, joining in with stories during assembly or solving area and perimeter calculations.
- The responses of parents, carers and staff to their respective surveys show that they think pupils' behaviour and safety are strengths of the school. Inspectors found that while pupils' behaviour is polite and respectful, their attitudes to learning are not always as positive as they should be.

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Leaders and managers have not ensured that learning activities are always well enough planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils to result in good progress, particularly in writing. This has limited the effective promotion of equality of opportunity in the school.
- Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching have not in the past had enough impact. In addition, where leaders have identified weaknesses in teaching, there has not been enough support to help teachers to improve their performance and their pupils' progress.
- Middle leaders know the strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision for, and pupils' achievement in, literacy and numeracy. The school's current focus on writing is beginning to improve pupils' progress, but leaders rightly recognise that more remains to be done. Improvements being made in the Early Years Foundation Stage are leading to better progress and rising attainment, for example in reading through the improved use of phonics.
- The school maintains detailed and regularly updated records of the attainment and progress of individual pupils and of the different groups, which the headteacher provides for teachers and governors. The school then provides additional support for pupils who are making insufficient progress. The use of the additional pupil premium funding has been particularly beneficial in improving pupils' reading skills.
- The subjects taught help pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

appropriately. Class assemblies help pupils to explore their feelings and promote positive relationships. Different cultures are celebrated through music, drama and art.

- In the Margaret Coates Centre, staff work together effectively to ensure that the pupils feel safe and well supported at all times.
- Leaders have used the additional primary school sports funding to provide specialist training for staff and to increase pupils' participation in sport, for example through lunchtime and after-school clubs, and through inter-county competitions. Leaders report improved participation rates in school sports clubs.
- The school has the capacity to improve. In addition to pupils' improved progress in reading and mathematics, and effective use of the pupil premium funding, leaders have successfully addressed issues concerning the quality of marking which was identified as a weakness at the previous inspection.
- A local authority representative visits the school termly. A recent report rightly identifies that pupils need to make improved progress, especially in Year 6.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are clear about the progress and attainment of different groups within the school, including those who are supported through the pupil premium, because this information is very well presented by leaders. They are also clear that this additional funding is helping pupils to improve their reading skills. They know, for example, that writing remains an area for improvement. They are less certain about how the school's performance compares with the national picture. Targets for school improvement set following the previous inspection report have not yet been reached. Governors know about the quality of teaching in the school. They also regularly make short visits to lessons to inform themselves about the school's work. Governors have undertaken training in order to extend their knowledge and expertise, for example in relation to child protection; this is a strong aspect of their work. They fulfil their statutory requirements, including those for safeguarding children. Governors do not have a sufficient understanding of the annual process of setting targets for teachers and whether or not teachers should move up their salary scales. They monitor the budget effectively.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	133290
Local authority	Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number	431070

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Cross
Headteacher	Keith Ford
Date of previous school inspection	20–21 March 2012
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